

Agenda Item: I.A.

DATE: April 14, 2005

SUBJECT: Status of Public Health Education

ACTION RECOMMENDED: Information

BACKGROUND INFORMATION: Staff will update the Commission with respect to activities in the area of academic public health. The update will include:

1. The University of Memphis (U of M) and the University of Tennessee Health Science Center (UT HSC) are working to establish an accredited, collaborative college of public health. A working group with representation from both institutions has been appointed and is completing drafting the proposal for such a college. U of M is completing the review of an accredited MPH program to be forwarded to TBR for review and approval within the month. In addition, U of M is developing the curriculum for the health administration, health behavior and environmental health MPH concentrations which are required to have an accredited collaborative college of public health. UT HSC is developing the curriculum for the required epidemiology and biostatistics concentrations. U of M is taking the lead in developing the doctoral programs required for accreditation. A proposal for the governance of the collaborative college of public health has been drafted and will be reviewed by the working group and then forwarded to the two institutions for review and approval. Dr. William F. Owen will start as Chancellor of UT HSC on Monday April 11 and the proposed collaborative college of public health is a prominent agenda item for his consideration.
2. East Tennessee State University (ETSU) is completing the following steps to establish an accredited college of public health. A proposed budget for a college is to be reviewed and forwarded to the President of ETSU by this week. The biostatistics concentration is in a final review by the faculty of the College and will be forwarded to the ETSU Graduate Council for review this month. The other four required concentrations of health administration, health behavior, environmental health and epidemiology already exist as part of the curriculum at ETSU. Because of new accreditation criteria adopted by the Council on Education for Public Health (CEPH) in February but which will not be official till June, the visit by an approved CEPH consultant has been postponed till July. After guidance is received from the visit of the CEPH consultant the doctorate degree programs will be forwarded from the college to the University for review and then on to TBR and THEC.

3. Tennessee State University continues to plan the development of the Masters of Public Health (MPH) and the Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) in public health degree programs. Documents should be advanced to TBR soon.
4. University of Tennessee Knoxville (UT K) continues to work to establish an Institute that will include several academic units at the UT K campus including: Health and Safety; Exercise; Sports and Leisure Studies; Nutrition; Social Work; Veterinary Medicine; UTIA, Extension; Psychology; Nursing, and several units of the Graduate School of Medicine. There is discussion of concentrations and dual degrees to go with the accredited MPH program at UT K.
5. Tennessee Institute of Public Health – A Task Force has been selected to establish the Tennessee Institute of Public Health. Commissioner Kenneth Robinson of the Department of Health and his staff have provided leadership and support along with the faculty of the academic public health programs and the staff of the Commission to this effort. Elizabeth Ann Williams, Ph.D., Director of Disparity Elimination is the Chair of the committee assigned the responsibility of recommending the organizational structure for the Institute. Nationally there are 25 such Institutes of Public Health and nearly all are private not-for-profit 501 (c) (3) organizations. The plan is to invite an individual from the organization, National Network of Public Health Institutes to a meeting in June to help the Task Force finalize the planning of the Tennessee Institute of Public Health. The Task Force will report to the Commissioner of Health, the Chancellor of TBR, the President of UT and the Director of THEC for their consideration and approval to establish the Institute.